



Kentucky Transportation Cabinet Office of Highway Safety

For Immediate Release

Media contact: Erin Eggen
502-564-1438
Erin.Eggen@ky.gov

2009 fatality count official: total drops to 10-year low *Fatalities decline for fourth consecutive year*

FRANKFORT, Ky. (March 29, 2010) — Kentucky highway fatalities dropped to a 10-year low in 2009.

The Kentucky Office of Highway Safety (KOHS) today released final statistics for 2009. There were 791 fatalities last year, 35 fewer than in 2008 and the lowest total since 1999, when the death toll was 729. Fatalities declined for the fourth consecutive year.

“The good news is that 35 fewer lives were lost,” Gov. Steve Beshear said. “The bad news is that people are still needlessly dying on Kentucky highways. We will not rest until the number is zero, because one fatality is one too many.”

Gov. Beshear’s Executive Committee on Highway Safety is working to update and implement the state’s strategic highway safety plan, which focuses on four critical elements: engineering, education, enforcement and emergency response.

Acting Transportation Secretary Mike Hancock, the governor’s designated highway safety representative and chair of the committee, said the data-driven, four- to five-year comprehensive plan includes collaboration from stakeholders at every level — federal, state, local and private — to identify safety needs and guide investment decisions.

“If our effort results in just one life being saved, it will have been worth it,” Hancock said.

Of the 791 fatalities last year, 649 were in motor vehicles. Of those killed, 61 percent were not buckled up and 20 percent of fatalities involved alcohol. Motorcyclists accounted for 80 fatalities. More than 60 percent of those killed were not wearing helmets and 19 percent of fatal motorcycle crashes involved alcohol.

“While the fatality decrease is an improvement, the numbers indicate many motorists still do not realize the responsibility that comes with a license,” said KOHS Executive Director Chuck Geveden. “We hope the combined efforts of state and local law enforcement and other safety partners will continue to raise public awareness of laws and safe driving practices.”

The KOHS offers various highway safety educational programs to the public, distributes federal highway safety grants to state and local highway safety agencies, and promotes the annual “Click It or Ticket” seat belt campaign and “Over the Limit. Under Arrest” impaired driving campaign.

For more information, visit www.highwaysafety.ky.gov.

Highway fatalities

1999	729
2000	823
2001	843
2002	915
2003	931
2004	964
2005	985
2006	913
2007	864
2008	826
2009	791

.
###